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THE

PEARING AND KINGDOM

OF OUR

LORD JESUS CHRIST:

IN FOUR LETTERS

TO AN UNBELIEVER.

BY JAMES SABINE,

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P R E F A C E .

THE GREAT DOCTRINE OF THE SECOND ADVENT (the subject of the following letters) has been upon the mind of the writer for about nine years. His attention was called up to consider this very interesting question through the means of sermons received from the Old World, particularly some able discourses from the pen and pulpit of English preachers, clergymen of the Church of England. McNeile, Biekersteth, Melvill, and some others, have written and preached with great force on this subject, while the Dissenters generally have been opposed to the doctrine, and have looked at it only, or chiefly, with a view to resist it, and put it down. At the time of the writer's embracing these views, he was not aware that any in this New World had paid the least attention to the subject. And what is most astounding, the Christian public have discovered very little interest in the DOCTRINE, however distinctly proclaimed, while the proclaimers have said little or nothing about *The Time*. Really, the professors of Christ's holy religion seemed to be proof against all impression arising from the mere assertion of the truth itself; but as soon as his coming SPEEDILY—HIS BEING AT THE VERY DOOR, was declared, men began to be uneasy; and when 1843 was announced, the whole matter of the Advent began to be clearly apprehended. Then "there were great searchings of heart;" then men began to be in trouble. O the depravity and deceitfulness of the human heart! While the Judgment of the Great Day is yet considered in the obscurity of distance, "for many days to come—for times that are afar off," men can bear the prophecy. "A little more sleep, a little more slumber." But no sooner is the cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him," than the world is up in arms—the church too! Alas, the blood-bought sons of Zion will not endure the tidings:—the church will do anything rather than prepare for the *immediate coming* of her LORD: she will bestir herself anew, and set about the conversion of the world afresh, rather than admit the possibility of her LORD's coming without delay. Though I may not be satisfied with the announced date of 1843 as the year of the Lord, yet if our learned chronologists can make it appear that our *Time Table* is 157 years behind HEAVEN'S DIAL, then I shall be persuaded to believe that A. D. 1843 will close the sixth millenary; and then, upon this system, the following year, A. D. 1844, the seventh millenary will commence, and so the coming of the Lord may be expected, early in the first Sabbatic year; on what day or at what hour who shall presume to say!

POSTSCRIPT.

"WHILE the Bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept." Such is the state of the whole church, as a body, at this present time; both the wise and the unwise: and if such be the condition with the professed followers of Christ, how much more may it be expected that the world,—“the world which lieth in wickedness,” should be totally indifferent to this all-important subject. Some few, however, of various names, are awake, and some few others are beginning to bestir themselves and look around them. Admitting this to be the real state of spiritual affairs, can anything be said in prejudice of the extraordinary exertion on the part of those few who seem to be fully awake to this GREAT QUESTION! It may be asked whether the ministers of Christ, who fulfil the ordinary and positive duties of their calling, can be justified in stepping over the line of their appointed path in order to increase the influence of their labors and render such labors more salutary and successful: I say this may admit of a question. But here is a case which no ordinary duties of a pastor and teacher, however well and faithfully those duties may be performed, can reach. The unfolding of the Prophetic Roll, and the “signs of the times,” have imposed upon the servants of God new and extraordinary duties. With all those who consider *the time as short, not knowing what a day may bring forth*—with all such, thus impressed and thus enlightened, no labors undertaken, no influence exerted, no zeal such knowledge dictates can be out of season or irregular. The way of such a minister’s duty is plainly before him; in every pulpit, accessible to his message, may he not sound the alarm? Or if the regular means of ministration be denied him, may he not be excused, if not justified, in going into more general measures? As a true “knight of the Holy Cross,” may he not join the “encampment,” and take the “tented field?” or may he not hold conference in public assembly with brethren of the same hope? Or may he not go out single-handed, without purse or scrip, and “proclaim the kingdom of heaven at hand?”—Indeed, no means that are lawful, but he may adopt so as to get sinners to hear. The church, the accredited household of faith, will not hear! Those who have been formally invited will not hear! They go one to his farm, another to his merchandise. He may go, therefore, out into the highway, into the streets and lanes of the city, and as many as he finds bid to the wedding! And as to those who refuse or neglect the offer, it is at their own risk; he may shake his raiment and say, “Your blood be upon your own heads—I am clean.”

THE
APPEARING AND KINGDOM
OF OUR LORD.

LETTER I.

THE MILLENNIUM.

The subject stated—Subject little understood—Generally resisted—Subterfuges—The subject demands decision and seriousness—Dr. South, Bishop Hall, and John Calvin eulogized by unbelievers.

THE MILLENNIUM, as a doctrine of Holy Scripture, is perhaps as feebly apprehended and as little understood, as is any one gospel doctrine beside, asserted and held out in the same sacred volume. It is a subject upon which very few Christians of these days have ever exercised their thoughts, and upon which they can have come to no decision. THE MILLENNIUM—"THE THOUSAND YEARS" spoken of in the apocalypse—THE LATTER DAY—THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST in the latter day, are terms which convey no distinct ideas to the minds of many serious and devout readers of the Scriptures. There are other expres-

sions too, on the same subject, in the writings of prophets and apostles, which are to many a dead letter, even things without life giving sound ! A few passages shall be cited, first from the Old Testament. Isaiah: "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." "Behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you." "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth !" "Arise, shine; for thy light is come," &c., to the end of the chapter. David, in the Psalms, abounds in like glorious foresight; and the minor prophets, too, exceed in glorious description: "In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth." "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." "The LORD hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne. There will I make the horn of David to bud, I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed: his enemies will I clothe with shame, but upon himself shall his crown flourish." Daniel: "And in the days of these kings shall the

God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, *but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." Zechariah: "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD: and many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of Hosts hath sent me unto thee." Now turn we to New Testament language, the saying and sentiments of Jesus and his apostles. "The coming of the Son of man." "The coming of the Lord." "The days of the Son of man, and the day of the Lord." "The glorious appearing of the Great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." "And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." "The kingdom of God's dear Son." "The kingdom of God and of Christ." "The gospel of the kingdom." "The day of the Lord cometh—the day of the Lord cometh as a thief." "Behold, I come quickly—even so, come Lord Jesus!" etc. etc.

You ask Christians, generally, including ministers, what they understand by these texts, and they will be at a loss to give any distinct idea upon the subject declared by them. It was just so with the writer some fifteen years ago: a circumstance then occurring,

will go to set this general ignorance on the subject of the Second Advent, in a position disgraceful to the Christian profession. A volume of sermons on the Second Coming was received from England, by a *bookseller* of this country. He thought the work would be acceptable to American readers, and therefore proposed to reprint it. The volume was handed to me, with a request that, if I approved of the work, I should write an advertisement to the proposed edition, recommending it to the notice of the Christian public. I read the work, of course, but saw nothing in it extraordinary or peculiar. What the author intended by the Second Coming of Christ I did not fully comprehend, but supposed he meant the general and final judgment. Well, I found that the work was what we call orthodox in its general principles; and so I sat down and wrote a page or two, recommending it upon the ground of its evangelism, and for its faithful development of the great truths of our common salvation. The recommendation thus written, notwithstanding the veil was before my eyes, and upon the heart too, was accepted as in point; but the work was never reprinted, for I believe the bookseller who employed me, and his friends to whom he showed my lame performance, were, equally with myself, all in the dark as it respected this doctrine of THE SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST. Another instance. A few years

since, I preached, at the request of a congregational brother, an occasional sermon, in his meeting-house, on a week day, being upon a visit for a few days in the town. My subject was the scoff of the unbeliever, "Where is the promise of his coming?" I was very particular and distinct on the point of dispute. After sermon, I asked him what were his views on the subject. From his answer, it appeared that he had been struck with nothing in the discourse out of the common way; his replies were so general that I concluded he had never been led to form any idea upon the question of the Advent. One circumstance more. While I was in London, in the month of May, 1839, I heard a very powerful and eloquent sermon from a Baptist minister, on a public occasion. The subject was the reign of the Messiah. A friend of mine who was very indifferent, or rather opposed, to the *new doctrine*, heard the same sermon. Upon seeing my friend shortly after, I found him lavish in praise of the *able* discourse. I informed him that I heard the same sermon and admired it too, especially as it was a most happy illustration of Christ's personal reign during the millennium. He was taken by surprise, and somewhat confounded, as well he might. And so it is with nine tenths of the religious community; they condemn what they know not, and admire the same thing which they, through ignorance, have reprobated and condemned.

The coming of Christ the second time, is a fact of revelation, which involves results and consequences of which accountable men wish to remain ignorant; yea Christian men, the professed followers of our Lord Jesus, boast themselves in their ignorance of this whole matter. That infidels and scoffers should be obstinate, and willingly, aye wilfully ignorant, is no matter of marvel; it is just what we might expect; we look for nothing less; their seared consciences and case-hardened spirits must do as much. But that believers should join issue with unbelievers, and he that believeth have part with an infidel, presents a case the most fearful and distressing. Nor are these good people content with rejecting the subject for themselves, but they calumniate their brethren, whose minds have been differently directed, and speak evil even unto reproach and contumely of all those who are inclined to this way. While it is not for me to decide upon the characters of men, nor upon the scrutiny Christ shall institute when he comes to judgment, it is highly becoming in me, and it is a privilege I claim, to judge for myself. If my convictions lead me to expect the personal appearance of Christ, and that shortly; and if these convictions lead me to believe that my acceptance as a Christian depends upon my obedience to Christ's commands and injunctions, can I do anything else than be at my post, watching and waiting as he

has appointed me. "Watch ye, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh." This I am well assured is my rule, and such I am equally assured ought to be *my* duty. Have I not a strong case in the symbol of the ten virgins? Were not the whole ten under one profession, and under one obligation? Did they not, all of them, profess to believe in the coming of the Bridegroom, and under that profession were they not bound to watch and wait, everything being ready, lamps and oil; and themselves upon the alert? And how was it that five of these ten failed? Was it not because they acted not up to their convictions? And so the case lies between those who believe in the speedy coming of Christ, and those who do not believe in this doctrine. Here are some few who do not profess to know the day nor hour when their Lord shall come, and therefore they are watching; and these you reproach as foolish and fanatic! You also profess not to know the time, and yet you do not watch, and you go so far as to scandalize those who do—going in the very face of our Lord's charge. Now, I ask with all seriousness, on which side do the presumption and the folly lie?

There is another subterfuge by which professing Christians avoid the obligation they are under to wait and hope for the speedy coming of their Lord. *They say that the whole Christian world is very much divided on this*

subject:—that even those who profess to believe in the doctrine itself, are nevertheless of different opinions on many important circumstances involved in the great question. True, there is much diversity of sentiment among Christians generally; and also among millenarians themselves in particular. And to what subject shall we turn our attention on which there are no opposing opinions? I know not of any. To speak to such an objection as this would be almost a waste of time and argument, as every one must see in a moment, if he only look seriously right down on the case. “*Well, drive me as hard as you may, and press me up into a corner as close as you can; this subject is but of secondary importance after all—a mere non-essential, make as much of it as you may.*” “*And farther, the gospel church has progressed, and wrought gloriously for ages past, without the admission of this theory into its scheme of general action!*” As to the non-essentiality of the point of doctrine now before us, something need be said by way of argument, so as to make it appear that this promise of Christ’s coming is not of that trifling import that you, and many besides, would represent it to be. And, indeed, there is an excess of this kind of *charity*, a willingness on the part of many Christians to give up to the prejudices or antipathies of many of their fellows, upon the ground that those points upon which they differ, are not *essential*. Now, I am averse

to this kind of charity by which some stubborn truths of revelation are resolved into non-essentials, but to which, however, these truths refuse to submit. There is the doctrine of our Lord's divinity, considered by all who do not hold to it, as not essential to the Christian faith: but the whole tenor of sacred Scripture places it upon the highest ground, and I am rather persuaded that the fact of our Lord's divinity is very closely connected with the fact of his coming again in glory and majesty. But, be it so or not, his SECOND COMING, or COMING AGAIN, is not an article in the faith of Christ so convenient and accommodating as to be presented to us for our reception or refusal, as may best suit our fancy. No, nor can I be brought to believe that the *form* and *time* of his COMING are matters of such indifference as to come before us without the mark and seal of Divine authority. To talk, and write, and preach about the reign and kingdom of Christ, without deciding upon the fact of his coming, whether it be in person or by proxy, really or spiritually, is to strip the subject of its glory, and to reduce the most magnificent fact declared in Scripture, to a tame and cold, and even undetermined item in the record of "the day of small things." "The Son of man shall come in glory—in his own glory—in the glory of his Father, with all the holy angels—the Son of man shall come in the clouds of heaven, and every eye shall see

him!" But, say you, we believe that Christ will come in person as the Scripture describes; but this personal coming is to be at the end of all terrestrial things, when the final judgment shall sit, and when all the wicked shall be consigned to hell, and the righteous taken up into heaven. Without controverting even this absurd view of the subject, I would just say that it seems to me to be *essential* to a good gospel state and condition, that the followers of Jesus should be well acquainted with all the great movements and measures of the Christian dispensation; i. e. whether Christ is to have any kingdom on this earth; what are the leading character and principles of this kingdom; what its extent; whether the king himself is to reign in person or by proxy; when (not the day or the hour, but the era *when*) this kingdom is to be set up, and its peculiar institutions established; and something too, distinct and rational, on the destiny of this earth, so far as this may be gathered from the word of God as made known to man in the Bible. Now I am prepared to say to you, my unbelieving friend, that it is very *essential* to the Christian character, especially to him who is a teacher of God's word, that we come to some distinct conclusions on the GREAT ATTRIBUTES of our Master's kingdom and majesty, and not to go on, as we have been going on for years past, with the insipid *sing-song* of, *this thing is not essential, and that thing is not essential.*

No, for the time is past, or very fast passing off, for this miserable indecision, this dull and sleepy apathy, this false charity. "Behold, the Judge standeth before the door!" "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." It was just so with those five silly damsels, who had taken a *fancy* to join the procession formed for a marriage festival. I dare say that they were, or that they thought they were, good and well-favored in their persons; and they had lamps, perhaps very elegant ones; and so they set out thus equipped, and with this affection warm upon their minds, they enrolled themselves on the list of guests. "Well, but," said a by-stander, "look, you have no oil in your vessels, and your lamps are already nearly out." "O," said they, "that is not *essential*; there are others here who have plenty, and perhaps what we have may be enough for the ceremony!" You know how that ended; and it would not be amiss if you were to treat the matter of our Lord's coming with more seriousness, and be *prepared* to meet him, lest you fail through your indifference to a subject that demands solemn attention.

And here, again, we are told that the gospel has progressed and succeeded gloriously for ages past, without the system of the Advent being wrought into its report. And so the inference drawn is that this theological theory is not essential to a good and efficient gospel ministry. I am by no means willing

to undervalue the power that has been exercised of late years in the ministry of the word, both at home and abroad; but then, this declaration is not strictly true, for, upon an examination into the case, it is found that some of the most zealous advocates of missionary labors are firm believers in the speedy coming of our Lord. In this Western region of the Christian world the doctrine of the Advent is but little understood, yet on the other side of the great waters a very considerable department of missionary ground is occupied by very zealous men of this faith. And there is another consideration. Preaching Christ crucified is the first great principle of gospel preaching. This has been done very faithfully, and God the Holy Spirit has borne testimony to this course of means, and so sinners have been converted: but it does not follow that what God has revealed of his Son's glory and kingdom, may be withheld as unnecessary in making known all the counsel of God. And there is one consideration more, that though the gospel has been preached without making known the nature of Christ's kingdom as we hold it, yet so much of the truth in regard to Christ's kingdom has been proclaimed, as to give converts some essential ideas on the subject. As first, a kingdom—a kingdom upon earth—the kingdom of heaven upon the earth, and Jesus, the Son of David, the Great King. Now then, whether these things have been

declared with a spiritual fulfilment in view, or otherwise, still they have been literally declared, and, therefore, so much of the doctrine has been apprehended as to give an evangelical cast to a kingdom on the earth; and that is all which is *absolutely* necessary in preaching the "kingdom of God."

But after all that may be said in allowance of this—*boast*, shall I call it?—for it savors of this unhumble spirit—nothing has been done, comparatively, in spreading the gospel, as might have been done, considering the means which have been possessed by the churches since the era of the Reformation. The spirit of missions had slept for ages when the usurpations of Rome were resisted: and not till about the middle of the 18th century had the Christian Church been aroused to her duty in this department of gospel administration. And even since, down to the present day, little has been accomplished among the heathen, except the conversion of a few scattered tribes in the Pacific Ocean, and some individuals within the vast nations of Asia; but as to the capture of any nation in the East, nothing of such importance has been brought to pass by the "missionary enterprise" of these days.

A few lines must be devoted to a fruitful source of scandal, by which the doctrine of the Second Advent has been prejudiced in the eyes of many a serious and devout Christian.

By these means the prophetic, and even apostolic writings have been contemned, and their authority set aside. DR. SOUTH, (not a very fair specimen of good character, I will admit,) in the plenitude of his impertinent wit, has said that "the study of the apocalypse either finds a man mad, or leaves him so." A much better man, Bishop Hall, condemns the study of the prophets, with the subject of the millennium in view, in "too sweeping a way;" and compliments himself for having more wisdom, and more real spirituality than to suffer himself to be carried away with the *carnal notions* of millenarians. Calvin (a name that combines everything excellent in the estimation of some, but everything execrable in that of others) is commended "for not having attempted the explanation of the book of Revelation." Many more instances might be cited, in which scandal is cast upon the study of the prophecies; and there is no doubt but there have been many profane speculations on these sacred writings. But, what of that? Has not divine revelation as a whole, and every doctrine of it in particular, been subject to profane and unworthy treatment? and nothing less can be expected in regard to the question before us. *Millenarian* has been in former times a designation for a *fanatic*, and that because to the scriptural doctrine of the one thousand years, have been conjoined a thousand absurdities, by which

soberminded Christians have been disgusted. And so, whenever in after-times the doctrine has been asserted, it has been taken for granted that these, or other absurdities more absurd, must be an essential part of the system. *The fifth monarchy men*, who rose during the interregnum in England, were millenarians. The anabaptists in Germany, in Luther's time, were a kind of millenarians; and so are the Shakers, or followers of Ann Lee. But the errors and superstitions of these fanatics, are not to be ascribed to the system of the millennium, any more than are the errors and superstitions of some of the early Christians to be ascribed to Christianity. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." With this passage of Holy Writ in view, how any believers in God's word can venture to pronounce the study of any part of the sacred volume *unprofitable*, and even injurious, is not for me to say; that will be determined another day; and more especially still, to decry the study of the unfulfilled prophecies, particularly the apocalypse, while this passage is before them: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand."

LETTER II.

ASPECTS OF THE MILLENNIUM.

Development of the writer's method—Proofs and illustrations from plain passages—The day of the Lord—The coming of the Lord—The appearing of the Lord.

It is not my intention to perplex my dear reader with proofs and illustrations, whereby to enforce my subject, drawn from the bold and vivid scenes so fully displayed in the writings of Daniel the prophet and John the divine. Neither shall I be so free and confident with my *algebra*, as to bring out my results to a day or a year. I shall decline the discussion of these very sublime, and in some instances hard-to-be-understood oracles; not because they are too mysterious and occult for general comprehension, but rather because these writings have been opened by others better capable of such researches than I am myself; and also, it is my conviction that the glorious Advent of Jesus is to be illustrated, as well as proved, by the more plain and didactic scriptures. I am free to declare it as my persuasion, that if there had been no visions of either Daniel or St. John, there had enough on this subject

been said by the Saviour himself, as recorded by his disciples and written by the apostles, to declare and develop this great mystery—the mystery of God manifest in the flesh—manifest the second time in glory and majesty to judge the world, both quick and dead; and to set up his throne in Zion; to put down all opposing authorities, and to reign king over all the earth. Now, the reader is not to understand me, from what I have just now written, as having a mean opinion of those Holy Writings to which I have referred, nor of the talents and attempts of those who have undertaken to interpret and apply them; far from it; the holy books themselves, when I only look upon them, inspire me with the most profound reverence and solemn awe; and as to those holy men, whether more or less learned, who have taken great and devout pains to explain and illustrate them, I do revere and respect them, and esteem them very highly for their works' sake. But my mind has not been directed so much into that course of study, and even if I had capacity for such a course, I should, for myself, prefer that which I have adopted, and for this plain reason, among others, namely; that the writings of Isaiah, Jeremiah, with some other prophets, are more literal and easy of comprehension than those of Daniel: and so with what the evangelists have recorded of matters immediately relating to the Messiah, as well as the epistles of Peter and

Paul—men who have expressed themselves so clearly on the subject of the Second Coming, so clearly and palpably, that the conclusions to which I have come, have been inevitable. My judgment then has dictated this same course in my usual discourses delivered on this mighty question; and though this method of treating the subject, may, in the opinion of some, be rather tame and dull, yet, for me, perhaps, it will be more safe, and I do humbly think more profitable to my reader.

With this explanation and development of my plan, I shall now proceed to some proofs and illustrations of so important a subject. The coming of a Divine Person, the Son of God in the flesh, has been the subject of prophecy from the beginning of creation, down to the close of the Old Testament canon; and then, to the close of the New Testament, his coming in his glory and majesty is the great object of Christian expectation. The coming of the Lord appears under somewhat different aspects, as it is represented and foretold severally by writers of the *Old*, and of the *New* Testament. By the former of these, the coming of the Lord is not always foretold in terms so explicit as to show the first coming as an event distinct from the Second Coming: indeed, it is hardly to be supposed that the prophets themselves, though inspired to foreshow the truth, comprehended distinctly those truths

predicted in their inspired writings. This conclusion may be gathered from the sentiments expressed by the disciples on the character of the Messiah: they had no idea of a *first* and *second* coming; they supposed all the ends of his incarnation would be answered at that time. If I were to venture upon a conjecture, I should admit the persuasion that the disciples, upon the *resurrection* of their Master, were delivered from the desperate condition into which his death had thrown them, and that they were fully justified in expecting the speedy establishment of his kingdom. This I think may be safely gathered from the hopes they expressed to him when they were brought together after the rising from the dead: "When they, therefore, were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom unto Israel?" And so with the Jewish nation, generally: they expected, when the Christ should come, that his coming would accomplish all the glowing predictions of the prophets in regard to the kingdom. It is to the gospel dispensation we are indebted for power whereby to discern between the separate designs of the *first* and *second* coming. By this view of the question we are confirmed in the doctrine of our Lord's appearing personally in glory and majesty.

I must now point you to two passages of Scripture, in which the *first* and *second* com-

ing of the Lord are both distinctly and severally marked, each in its place and order. Luke i. 68, 69, 70. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began." These are the words of Zacharias, who, being "filled with the Holy Ghost," prophesied of the glory and majesty of Jesus, whose majesty Zacharias anticipated upon the birth of this holy child. The inspiration that was upon his mind did not lead him into any consideration farther than that glory and power to which this mysterious child was destined as the Son of David; not seeing into that humility and those sufferings which were to precede the event of the kingdom: and this is all that is necessary to our purpose at this time. Zacharias, by the Holy Ghost, foresaw the glory and majesty of the Lord, as he declares to be predicted by all the holy prophets, from the beginning of the world. Now, to the second passage, Acts iii. 19, 21. "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the

mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." These are the words of the apostle Peter, spoken after the death of Jesus, in view of his Second Coming; but in both cases the glory, and personal majesty of Jesus are declared to be the subject of prophecy from the beginning of the world. Now, this is the subject, my dear reader, I have to impress upon your mind, namely, that the coming and kingdom of the Son of God is the great subject of "holy" prophecy, from the foundation of the world. Indeed, this has been the burden of the word of the LORD in every age. "To Him give all the prophets witness." I need not at this time cite passages from the prophets, in view of his first coming, only to say that Isaiah foretells his humiliation, as the "man of sorrows," and the acquaintance of grief: and Daniel declares his death; "after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself." The coming of Christ in glory is our particular object, and his coming *personally*, too, not in *opposition*, but in *contradistinction* to his *spiritual* coming, for which some so zealously contend. The whole of the lxxii. Psalm may be regarded as the most pointed testimony; a verse or two will be sufficient. "Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son:—He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth—yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all

nations shall serve him." The type here is Solomon, David's son; a very natural symbol, because the antitype is David's Son, and, as the Messiah, David's Lord. No one can doubt the personality of the subject of this prophecy, nor that it is applicable to Jesus Christ; for very little of this magnificent prediction was ever fulfilled in the person and reign of Solomon. The xlv. Psalm is equally expressive of a personal manifestation. "My heart is inditing a good matter; I speak of the things which I have made touching the king. Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre; thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Isa. xi. "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him:" and so on. Here too, everything looks like a personal manifestation. Again. "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious." The language here is highly figurative, but the object illustrated is real and personal.

Daniel shall speak in terms peculiar to his own inspiration. Chap. vii. 13. "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they

brought him near before Him; and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." I hardly need repeat what I have said before, on the personality of our Lord's manifestation: nor need I add any more citations from the Old Testament prophecy, "words spoken by the holy prophets, which have been since the world began."

As the Old Testament left this subject, so the New took it up. I would not say that the humiliation of Jesus is overlooked; by no means; but no sooner is Jesus, the Son of God, announced, and his birth declared, with all the humble circumstances attending his appearance in the flesh, but his dominion and majesty, his power and glory, his heirship to the throne of his Father David, and the certainty of his rule over all the earth, become the theme of prediction, and the subject of the most enlarged expectation. The page of history, as it is opened in the New Testament, is, it is true, a detail of the sufferings of our Lord; and, farther, the great subject of the apostolic ministry is "Jesus Christ and him crucified." It could not be otherwise; the end for which he was born could not be accomplished but as "he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." His kingdom had become alien,

and his subjects rebels; all his earthly domains had become apostate; all was under the arrest of divine justice. It was necessary, therefore, absolutely necessary, that the Incarnate King should first make atonement for the sins of his rebel subjects, and open the way of reconciliation. Redemption was his first work; and this work being performed and rendered complete through his death, the apostles went out, commissioned and instructed by their Master, and preached Jesus who was crucified, that through him men might "receive remission of sins," through faith in his death. "And he commanded them to preach unto the people; and to testify that it is He which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead." The apostles having clearly and faithfully set before the world the *priestly office* of Christ, they then turned the attention of the same people to the *kingly office* of this same Jesus, whom God had appointed to the throne of David. "Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Jesus, himself, in his discourses, publicly before the people, sets forth this subject in terms too plain to be controverted. The parable of the vineyard and the husbandmen, (Matt. xxi.) the parable of the servants, (Luke xxiv.) and of the ten virgins, (Matt. xxv.) all and each of them develop and fore-

show this great event. Jesus speaks, without parable, of coming in the clouds of heaven in glory—in the glory of the Father, with the holy angels. The Lord Jesus was, if I may so speak, anxious that his disciples should have the fullest assurance of his glorious return: hence he is ample in the means of information on this most interesting subject; and this important information is committed to the ministry of angels, to which they bear testimony up to the hour of his departure, even as he ascended to heaven in the presence of his apostles. “And while they looked steadfastly towards heaven as he went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said, “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come again in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”

The passages I shall call up from the apostolic writings may be classed under three heads, namely: THE DAY OF THE LORD—THE COMING OF THE LORD—THE APPEARING OF THE LORD.

THE DAY OF THE LORD. It would be a kind of epoch—a memorable period for a particular purpose; and so it will appear in the text now to be cited. 1 Cor. i. 8: “Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless IN THE DAY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.” Again, 2d Epistle i. 14: “That

we (apostles) are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus." 1 Thess. v. 2: "For yourselves know perfectly that THE DAY OF THE LORD so cometh as a thief in the night." These passages (and many more of similar import might be quoted) very clearly express a period in the gospel dispensation, upon which the apostles laid no small stress—A DAY when they expected their Lord to make some certain and peculiar manifestation, both of his *person* and of his *will*. In allusion to this DAY, the apostle Paul, in another place, says, "THE DAY shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."

THE COMING OF THE LORD—the day when his expected coming was to be realized. 1 Cor. i. 7: "Waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. ii. 19: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ AT HIS COMING?" Chap. iii. 13: "To the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, AT THE COMING of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." There is a very interesting event connected with the coming of Jesus in the next passage I shall recite from the same epistle, Chap. iv. 15: "For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain AT THE COMING of the Lord, shall not prevent

(shall not have the advantage of) them which are asleep; for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven," &c. The event here revealed is *the resurrection of the saints* at the coming of the Lord from heaven. The resurrection of the wicked is not spoken of here: in another place their resurrection is appointed at a distant period, not till after the one thousand years be fulfilled. The coming of the Lord, I infer therefore, is at the commencement of the thousand years, not at the conclusion of them. Other apostles beside St. Paul, adopt the same sentiments. James: "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the COMING of the Lord—for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." Peter: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and COMING of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty." "Looking for, and hasting unto the COMING of the day of God." Jude, also, in a most expressive quotation from an antediluvian prophet, "Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these" days, saying, "Behold, the Lord COMETH with ten thousand of his saints."

The third form of the Advent is THE APPEARING OF CHRIST. 1 Tim. vi. 14: "I give thee charge (son Timothy) in the sight of God—that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until THE APPEARING of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Tim. iv. 1: "I charge thee, therefore, before God

and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead at his APPEARING and his kingdom." 8th verse: "Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his APPEARING." Peter joins issue with his *brother Paul*, and announces the same gracious reward for all who patiently wait for him. 1st Epis. v. 4: "And when the chief shepherd shall APPEAR, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." 1st John iii. 2: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." In the 28th ver. of the ii. chap., the terms both *appearing* and *coming* are used as synonymous. "And now, little children, abide in him; that when he shall APPEAR, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his COMING!"

From these three articles, namely, THE DAY OF CHRIST—THE COMING OF CHRIST—AND THE APPEARING OF CHRIST, we are very plainly taught,

1st. That the *promise* and *prediction* of Christ's return, with the expectation of Christ's followers founded thereon, justifies our conclusion in favor of his personal advent! Indeed, we consider the advent of Jesus necessary to millennial glory, and there-

fore, the coming of the Lord must be before that period, and not afterwards. We are taught again, 2dly. That the prophets foretold generally, and the apostles expected particularly, the personal presence of the LORD MESSIAH at his coming. If the prophets did not foresee and foretell the actual and personal presence of the Redeemer of Israel when they predicted his glorious advent, I must say their ideas on the subject were expressed in a language and in words calculated to mislead those who received their message. But I apprehend that it was their intention to convey this very idea to those to whom they were sent. Yes, the apostles themselves understood them in this sense, for they quote these same prophets in testimony of this conviction. Acts, chap. iii. ver. 21, as above referred to, is in proof the most irrefragable! 3dly. The apostolic epistles are evidently written in such a spirit and style as to awaken in the readers' minds, a holy longing and fervent expectation in regard to the glorious advent of God's dear Son, in the event of which they were to be repaid for all their toil, and travail which they had endured for the love of so great and blessed a Master. St. Paul expected to seal the testimony he had borne to the truth with his blood; in prospect of which his mind becomes the most elevated, and his sentiments are expressed in language glowing and grand. "I am now ready to be

offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith: henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the LORD, THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGE, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing!" The coming of the Lord is so anticipated that it seems to be, in the estimation of the saints, the substance of all their hopes, and the fruition of all that might be desired! The disciples of our Lord were all taken up with it: nothing could assuage the throbbings of their troubled hearts but this promise—"I will come again unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." And will any one of the household of faith tell me that he has no interest in this second coming—nothing to expect when he shall appear—all they look for is to be prepared for death, and then the rest will follow? Alas, that there should be such apathy on a subject so far exceeding every other, named as it may be, whether in heaven, or on the earth—a subject which is the chief glory of Revelation! Indeed, the subject itself, the glorious advent of our Emanuel, is sufficient alone to give the tone of inspiration to those writings, which, but for this, have been held, by many, in doubtful divinity. For myself, I must say, that nothing has so cleared up the forbidding aspect of Solomon's canticle, as the applica-

tion of the following beautiful lines to the BRIDEGROOM, which cometh out of his chamber, bedecked with jewels, to rejoice over his BRIDE!

“ ——— The voice of my Beloved !
Behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains,
Skipping upon the hills.
My Beloved is like a young roe or a hart.
Behold, he standeth behind our wall,
He looketh forth at the windows,
Showing himself through the lattice.
My Beloved spake, and said unto me,
Rise up, my Love, my Fair One, and come away ;
For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone,
The flowers appear on the earth,
The time of the singing of birds is come,
And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.
The fig tree putteth forth her green figs,
And the vines, with the tender grape give a good smell.
Arise my Love, my Fair One, and come away.

Until the day break, and the shadows flee away,
Turn, my Beloved, and be thou like a roe,
Or a young hart upon the mountains of Bethel.”
CANT. ii. 8—13, 17.

HE THAT TESTIFIETH THESE THINGS SAITH,
SURELY, I COME QUICKLY; AMEN. EVEN SO,
COME, LORD JESUS. AMEN.

LETTER III.

THE SECOND ADVENT THE HOPE OF ISRAEL.

The subject exciting—The passions must be held in submission—The promise to Abraham—To Jacob—To David—The promise, its letter and spirit—How understood—The Messiah, Priest and King—These offices not properly apprehended and reconciled by early converts—The faith of the apostles—Reports examined—One gospel for Jew and Gentile.

THE seed of Abraham, in the house and lineage of Jacob, will be found to be a people holy unto the Lord, and the lot of the Lord's inheritance even unto the end of the world. Their character, history, and experience seem to be essential to the economy of divine grace, as revealed in both testaments, the Old and the New. Indeed, my dear reader, I cannot see how the purposes of the Holy Covenant can be fulfilled without this peculiar people occupy a most commanding station in the grand drama. As it is not my prescribed course to controvert and litigate, so much as to lay down, the plainly revealed truths of our gospel, I shall content myself with the mere acknowledgment and allowance of what is said and prophetically

taught concerning the house of Israel; and so much only of this as necessarily connects with the glorious coming of our Lord. I am well aware of this one thing, namely; that a subject, at the head of which stands, in glorious array, the appearing and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, must, if affectionately embraced, produce a strong and deep impression upon the mind: indeed, it can hardly be otherwise than that the believer should be carried away with it. The apostle, in a similar case, says, "The love of Christ constraineth us," &c. *We are carried away by it—we have no power by which to resist—we are not our own, we are Christ's, and at His will—Christ is all and in all.* But, my brother, the apostle was not left to the guidance, or rather to the impetuosity of his own passions; he spake and acted as moved by the Holy Ghost. Now it is a matter of very serious inquiry whether we in our zeal for the faith of this mighty FACT,—(a *fact* it will be shortly, an object of *faith* it is as yet,)—shall be under so safe and sure a guide. We are very liable to be led away by human passion, and even, I had almost said, infuriated by human prejudice. I am the more inclined to some caution and self-examination on this point, from what appears from time to time in our *millennial journals*. The conductors of these call hard names, and fasten terms of reproach on some who do not see with them, and who

do not dare to express themselves so confidently as if they knew themselves to be moved by the Holy Ghost, as was most assuredly the apostle, and as are, and were *not*, most assuredly, Messrs. Editors and correspondents in these journals. No, my *friend and brother*, all your unbelief notwithstanding, I am not expecting to convert you to the faith of Christ, even as I hold that faith, by the bold assertion of hypothesis, the traditions of men—human opinion, and private interpretation; my expectations run in quite another channel, the pure stream of God's word, I trust. I hope to be always ashamed to put my own comment on the prophets, merely to make them to speak for me and not for their Lord. (See S. T., No. 9, vol. III., Exp. Isa. xi.) That mind is but very partially chastened by the Divine Spirit which can arrogate an authority by which to expound God's word so as to make its meaning distinctly different from its assertion. Let us be careful to watch against such a daring and unbelieving temper, while we pursue the subject to be considered in this letter.

Let us, my dear reader, have some good understanding in the matter now in hand. Our subject is THE COMING OF CHRIST—the SECOND *coming*. Now let us consider what is expressed and implied in this *coming* simply. The person of the Mediator Messiah appears first in promise as the seed of the

woman; then as the seed of Abraham:—
“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ.” Then, after this, the promise is confirmed in the house of Jacob, in the tribe of Judah. David and his house follows. To David the promise of the Messiah is very special and particular; so distinct and plain that I need not quote in proof: but to this point of promise we come for a more full and clear development of the personal character of the promised one. To David, who is also called a “prophet,” the deity of his Son is revealed; “Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever.” And other prophets too, are inspired to testify this same fact. The same is confirmed by GABRIEL, the first spirit in waiting in the divine presence; by him his birth is announced to his virgin mother: “He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the LORD God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end!”

The purpose for which the Son of God was manifest in the flesh was not wholly accomplished during his sojourn upon earth for thirty-three years, in humiliation even unto death—the death of the cross; being made a sacrifice for sin. He is to appear the second time, without sin unto salvation. *This sec-*

ond appearance is the hope of Israel; and this is the fact we are to open and confirm in this letter.

The history of the whole house of Israel need not be given in detail, only remarking as we pass, that the revolt of the ten tribes, in the days of Rehoboam, and their continuance in a separate state to this day, must give to their several histories a character peculiar to each, as their condition may severally be. I have only to add here, that the revolt of the ten tribes, and their oblivion at the time of Christ's first advent, would seem to excuse them from all responsibility in the matter of Christ's rejection and crucifixion; a matter involving an accountability the most severe and awful as it concerned the Jews. I am aware that a remnant of every tribe, perhaps, "scattered" among their Jewish brethren, might be offered as an objection to the present argument; but to me it appears very plain, that these *scattered remnants*, however identified, cannot be admitted in opposition to the general question.

ISRAEL is a generic term, and is often used for Jews, children of the house of Judah, as well as for those scripturally called Israel, children of the ten tribes. They have both one common hope in their promised Messiah. Let us now examine into the letter of that promise upon which the sons of Jacob had settled their hope. And then what was that very thing they, through all generations,

have expected in order to the fulfilment of that promise?

1st. What was the letter, the distinct character of that promise upon which the faith and hope of Israel rested? The reply must be as the Scripture warrants. The promise to Abraham runs thus: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies: and in thy seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed." The apostle, as we have seen before, applies this promise to Christ, as the seed of Abraham. To the covenant with Abraham, the sons of Jacob have always, and in all ages, both before and since their dispersion, referred with great pertinacity; nor can the letter of their claim be disputed. The dying Jacob revealed the promise of Shiloh, the SENT ONE: "And to him shall the gathering of the people be." To Moses was the promise of a prophet like unto himself, sovereign in authority and mighty in dominion. The book of Psalms, and the books of the prophets are so full, that only a passage or two can be cited. Ps. lxxxix. 3: "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David, my servant, thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne unto all generations." Verse 20: "I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him." 25th: "I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers,

and I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth." The prophet Isaiah, ix. 6, 7: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called WONDERFUL, COUNSELLOR, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING FATHER, THE PRINCE OF PEACE. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. THE ZEAL OF THE LORD OF HOSTS WILL PERFORM THIS." These noble and sublime prophetic promises are repeated almost to the letter, when his immediate approach was announced. The angel Gabriel, who addressed the virgin mother, uses this strong and highly wrought language: "Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the LORD GOD shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end!" There can be but one idea gathered from these prophecies and promises;—in the person of God's Son a king is promised, and his kingdom is to be established over the house of Israel, upon the throne of David, to which dignity and dominion the king is entitled, being of the house and lineage of David.

2d. Our next inquiry is, in what sense was this promise understood, and what was that very thing which the sons of Israel expected, in order to the fulfilment of this promise?

And here, my dear reader, it will be necessary to ask whether the whole character and office of the promised Messiah had been develop'd in the promises and predictions above cited? The promises and predictions, which have been before us, are but a brief selection from a very large class—I say class of promises, for there are promises and predictions of another order, relating to another character which the Messiah was appointed to sustain. Those already before us relate to the kingly office—those now to be glanced at will develop the office of the priest: and it would seem that this priestly office in the promised Saviour, was very partially apprehended, and by many overlooked. The nation of Israel had such an exalted opinion of the sacerdotal economy appointed for the congregation, that it scarcely entered into their minds that this whole office of rites was but the shadow of some good, some better thing yet to come. And equally absent from their minds was the impression that their Messiah should sustain the office of a priest, and furnish in his own person the victim to be offered and the priest to officiate!

And too, there is another thing: the prom-

ise of an anointed king, like unto David, and of David's line, was more fully, and more literally made known than was the fore-showing of the priestly character: and so the kingly promise took the precedence of the priestly promise; the royal impression was first made, and it took such extensive hold upon the mind that what followed of the Messiah's sacerdotal character scarcely made any impression at all. The circumstances of adversity into which the people of the Jews fell from time to time, would lead them, very naturally, to look for a king and mighty captain to subdue their enemies, rather than to expect a priest to make atonement for their sins. They, as a nation, had no very distinct idea of any other office in their promised Messiah but that of a king. This was the case, not only with the nation at large, but the select few who were found waiting for the consolation of Israel at the time when Jesus came; they had no idea of a suffering Messiah. And even when it had been proved to the apostles that Christ must needs suffer, and rise again from the dead, the kingdom was first and warmest upon their minds; for when they came together after the resurrection, they said to their master, in anxious tone, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom unto Israel?"

This very brief reference to Christ's priestly office, will lead us to conclude on the in-

quiry, *How and in what sense the promise of the kingdom was expected to be fulfilled?* The promise was taken literally; nor does the ignorance of the Jews in general, in regard to the priesthood of their Messiah, in the least invalidate their faith in the promise of their king. Jesus reproved his disciples, and that with some severity, for not apprehending the necessity of his death: "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets he expounded unto them, in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself." But in this reproof for unbelief in regard to his sufferings, there is no reproof for faith in the promise pertaining to his "glory"—and "majesty:" nor when they pressed the question on the *time* of his *restoring again the kingdom*, did he reprove them on their hope in that kingdom; his reproof was on their anxiety to know the *time*, not on their faith in the kingdom itself: "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power."

We are left then to conclude that the sons of Israel generally, and the disciples of Jesus in particular, expected, in the fulfilment of the promise, that the Messiah should literally and personally ascend the throne of David, and reign KING of kings, and LORD of lords. The

disciples of Jesus especially looked for his glory at the second coming; for nothing of this glory had been revealed during the time of his coming in the flesh, and before his suffering and death. No, nothing during the thirty-three years of Christ's sojourn on this earth could in any wise be said to have occurred by which these glorious promises and bold predictions were realized. There were many things said, during the life and ministry of Jesus, even from his very birth to the hour of his death, which referred to his kingly power and majestic glory; but it could never at any one time be said that he was actually in the exercise of royalty, or that he favored the display of majestic pomp. Enough is said, however, and some things are in course of action, by which it is made to appear that this same Jesus is born to the highest distinction. Even when his birth is announced, the angel Gabriel declares his royal lineage, and royal title. The wise men from the east come to worship him who was "born king of the Jews." Nathaniel, the humble and guileless disciple of the Lord, hails his Master, as "the Son of God, and the King of Israel." The idea of a kingly title followed him, at times, all through his ministry; and at one time the multitude were so set upon his exaltation, that they were determined to come and by force make him a king. The children in the temple shouted Hosannah to the king of Israel. Pilate ques-

tioned him closely upon his assumption of royal dignity: "Art thou a king, then? The dying thief acknowledged his power and majesty: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Thus his power and glory as a king was the hope of Israel. But this hope was not realized; there was hardly anything to flatter this expectation from beginning to end of his career; and he died at last upon the cross, under an imputation of having assumed, unjustly and seditiously, the royal title. But this hope was carried forward by his disciples, and Israel still looked for redemption through faith in his promise of return. Indeed, it could hardly be otherwise; if they had relinquished this hope in him, they must have given way to suspicions unfavorable to his Messiahship; and in their estimation, his character must have sunk into that of a deceiver. But the apostles, as well as all his other faithful followers, were happily delivered from all such fearful delinquency: they knew too well upon what their faith had rested, to allow themselves, by such seeming disappointments, to be beaten off from their high expectations. And then when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were endued with power from on high, by which they were enabled to comprehend all the grand attributes of the promised kingdom; under which unction they went out and preached the gospel of the kingdom, teaching men to

look for the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Here, my reader, we might turn our attention to the state and condition of the children of Abraham in the present day, that we might see whether they have any hope, and what that hope is! And here I am compelled to feel an impression which is far from according with my best charities. What I am referring to now is the discordant and even jarring accounts given by travellers and tourists who have gone over eastern territory, especially that of the Holy Land. Some of these, one class of them, speak of many favorable appearances among the Jews sojourning in those parts; and they also assert that there is an increasing influx of Jews from time to time, so as to render a Jewish population very visible and imposing. These accounts are readily acknowledged by those Christians who are expecting the literal return of this nation to their ancient inheritance. On the other hand, these favorable reports are absolutely contradicted, and the contradiction goes to declare that the number of Jewish sojourners in that land, is diminishing very fast! This counter-statement, too, is fondly received by all those whose faith is repugnant to the return and gathering of Israel into their own borders.

Now here is a perplexed case, and we may be left to struggle between conflicting

and opposing elements. Our way, however, is not by this course; we come to our conclusion through a different channel. Little confidence can be placed on the reports of secular men, travellers and mariners, merchants and speculators. Abating some exceptions, we have had a miserable detail of folly and falsehood, of truth and ignorance, of prejudice and extravagance, in the reports of such witnesses, that we hold ourselves bound to take very little upon their credit—nothing more than what is vouched by better authority. The Christian public have agencies established for these purposes; and from these accredited sources we learn, among other things not before us now, that within the last thirty years, missions direct to the Jews have been in operation. By these means, so many from time to time have been converted to the faith of Jesus, THE CRUCIFIED ONE, that Christian societies have been formed of their numbers; pastors and teachers have been appointed them; devout conferences have been held by the Jews in many parts of the world; serious inquiries have been made on the subject of their present condition and future hopes. These means and measures have brought the Jews so much into harmony with Christians, that we have been enabled to come at their views and sentiments on the great subject of their hopes in the promised Messiah.

Here then opens to us the present hope of

the Jews. They expect the promise of the ANOINTED ONE to be fulfilled in the coming of the Son of David; a king to sit upon the throne of his father David. In confirmation of this, these Jews appeal to the prophets generally, and in particular to Jesus and his apostles, all of whom they affirm to be of the same mind, if their sayings and writings are to be depended upon. This hope of the Jews may be traced along the line of their history, from the captivity down to the close of Scripture canon: this same faith and hope characterize the expectations of all those who were waiting for the consolation of Israel at the incarnation of God's dear Son. This and these follow on in the ministry of Christ and in the belief of the apostles, as their writings abundantly testify.

If such be the hope of the Jew as a Jew—such is the hope of the Jew as a Christian. I have heard of some converted Jews who have abandoned all hope in the call and gathering of their nation: but such instances are rare. The Jew, by becoming a Christian, loses nothing of his privilege as a Jew; his hope and expectation in the Messiah are enlarged and enriched; all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus become his by faith in the new covenant; the graces of the Spirit are sealed to him, repentance, and hearty contrition for the sin of unbelief, especially for having rejected and for having crucified the Lord of life and

glory, a new heart and a new spirit, re-adoption into the family of God, and a title to all the blessed immunities of the household of faith. If to preach this gospel to the Jews is calculated to harden their hearts, then the preaching of this gospel to the Gentiles is calculated to produce the same effect upon them; for nothing but the gospel of the grace of God—free grace—grace without the works of the law, can turn any to righteousness, whether he be Jew or Gentile. And let all the Gentiles know assuredly that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, NOT IMPUTING THEIR TRESPASSES UNTO THEM: and this word of reconciliation is committed to the ministers of God, that they may show unto sinners throughout all the world, this only method of salvation—salvation from sin, death, and hell. This is the only hope of Israel. “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the Great God, our Saviour Jesus Christ,”

I remain, &c.

LETTER IV.

THE SECOND ADVENT THE HOPE OF THE CHRISTIAN,
THE FULFILMENT OF GOSPEL PROMISE, AND THE
CONSUMMATION OF THE WHOLE EVANGELICAL
ECONOMY.

*This hope was the subject of the Christian ministry—
The faith of the Christian—The future state, the
subject of both Testaments—The hope of the Chris-
tian consummated in the kingdom of Christ—The
times indicate the approach of the great event.*

“By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of reward.” How is it, then, that some modern divines have attempted to establish a system of “disinterested benevolence,”—a love to God, and a submission to his will, without any regard to our own happiness? Upon the same principle goes a new-fangled conceit, namely, “that a man must be willing to be

damned, if the glory of God requires it." The subject I have now to propose to my reader, in this letter, is in distinct opposition to all such *theological quibbling*: we shall be led to consider the hope we have in Christ for a blessed immortality, a motive to faith in him. The apostle Paul, in the midst of all the calamities and distresses to which he was exposed in "this life," was buoyed up with the hope he had "in Christ" of a glorious reward—a reward of grace when he should appear. In the 15th chap. of the first epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul takes up the resurrection of Christ, which he wishes to confirm as an indisputable matter of fact; for, upon this fact he raises all his hope and confidence of the resurrection of Christ's followers. He, with all his fellow-laborers, expects to be rewarded at the resurrection of the just—the resurrection of whom is to be effected when Christ shall appear the second time; then they that "sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." The subject now opens, THE SECOND ADVENT—THE HOPE OF THE CHRISTIAN. And why such repose upon the second coming of our Lord? Why? Because it will be the fulfilment of gospel promise, and the consummation of the whole evangelical economy!

The second advent the HOPE of the Christian. What is it? Let us see; and that we may see, let us carefully and devoutly exam-

ine. This hope of the Christian is not to be defined in contradistinction to the hope of Israel, but rather in agreement therewith. Nevertheless, there is something in the hope of the Christian that may be considered apart from the hope of the Jew. The first promise was to man, to the man who first sinned, to him and to his posterity, even to as many as should believe. This covenant of the woman's seed was confirmed, in the line of Seth, from Adam to Noah, and from Noah to Abraham. When this covenant was confirmed to Abraham, and to his descendants, there was in the promise more than a little which pertained to an earthly inheritance, a particular and defined country, the land of Canaan. This promise runs along, and from time to time is afresh confirmed with additional pledges, royal domains and a line of kings. To David especially, this promise is made, and that in reference to a KING of his lineage, who is to be THE SOVEREIGN OF THE WORLD, as well as king of Israel. Thus the coming and power of this "GREAT KING," are foreseen and celebrated all through the books of the prophets. Hence we are led to see that the hope of Israel was distinctly fixed upon a king of the house of David, whose throne was to be established in Jerusalem. It was, however, in the expectation of every true Israelite, to be a king reigning in righteousness, establishing truth and justice in the earth.

This hope of Israel was never relinquished nor denied by the apostles of Jesus; when they went out and preached Christ crucified, and offered him to the world as a Saviour to save mankind from their sins. they never blinked the question of the kingdom, nor the title of their Master to royal dignity, as heir to the throne of David. It is true, that the Jews had generally agreed to reject the claims of Jesus, and to hold him in the light of an impostor: but the preachers of Christianity, and all the ministers of the Christian faith, boldly declare that this same Jesus was both Lord and Christ, and that he would yet appear and come again with power and great glory, to judge the world, and to set up his kingdom. To be more particular still, I must observe,

That the second coming of the Lord was the hope of the first Christian ministers. Their being Jews by birth, and their having this hope as such, does not at all affect this hope which they held as Christians. The apostles, after the death of their Master, had come into possession of a correct knowledge upon the subject of his mission. They had been fully instructed by divine communications, to expect their reward not till their Lord should come again; which coming again had been declared in plain promises, and which they were persuaded would be even as it had been told them. Upon this question, namely, that of his coming again,

they could have no doubt! If, indeed, he had been holden of the power of death, and the grave had held him captive, then all might have been given up for lost; but they were witnesses to his resurrection; they saw him alive after his passion; they had many personal interviews with him; they received from him a plenary commission to preach the gospel to all nations for the obedience of faith. And now what did that gospel include? This must be set down in a few words. The very first sermon developing the office and character of Jesus, and delivered too on the day of Pentecost, exhibits a striking specimen of apostolic views. Peter is the speaker. After vindicating his Master's honors, and rebutting Jewish scandal, he sets forth the royal titles of the crucified Nazarene in these words: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus both LORD AND CHRIST."

The primitive ministers of the Lord Jesus were the eleven apostles, not to mention the seventy. These were called, during their Master's time of administration, and it is

very clear that they expected his elevation to the kingly dignity. Great was their disappointment upon his death, an event which seemed to be a death-blow to all their hopes. From this consternation, however, they were fully recovered, and with better informed minds they entered upon their work. But, as it respected the apostle Paul, he was called to his high office, and engaged to the labors of the ministry, with all the shame and ignominy of the cross before him. Jesus showed him particularly how great things he must suffer for his name. At this he was not stumbled nor abashed; he gloried in the cross, knowing well that there was a crown of glory laid up for him, and that it would be given him at his Master's appearing. The epistles are rich in these triumphant expectations—all which expectations and hopes are carried on to the promised *coming again*. Upon what other event could they fix their hope? All that was past, notwithstanding the flattering prospects of the disciples, had vanished like a dream; nothing was left to these his followers, but this promise of return; and it was this promise that St. Paul took up wherewith to gird him as he addressed himself to his work: this promise was his whole armor, his breastplate and shield, his helmet and sword. Thus armed and furnished, he went forth with the love of Christ warm upon his heart, and the word of Christ upon his lips: "I know whom I

have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against THAT DAY!" As this champion entered upon this service and persevered, so he finished: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at THAT DAY; and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing!" So much for Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles; now for Peter, the apostle of the circumcision, with his companions in labor. "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed. Feed the flock which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. And when the CHIEF SHEPHERD SHALL APPEAR, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

Without an *act of uniformity* being passed by the legislature, the apostles have most evidently subscribed one creed; the apostles Paul and Peter are one in their faith on the second coming. Now let us see how this same faith settles upon the minds of James and John. "Be patient, brethren, (says James,) unto the coming of the Lord. Be-

hold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." This coming of the Lord (personally, I should conclude) is the hope of James as a minister of Christ, and of those Christians to whom he ministered. St. John calls his followers to this same hope. "And now little children abide in him; that when he shall appear we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before HIM AT HIS COMING."

Again. The second advent was the hope of the faithful of every grade. The Christians, as such, looked to the second coming of their Lord for redemption. We have not the sentiments of Christians generally expressed by themselves in regard to this subject, as we have the minds of the apostles expressed by themselves in their writings; therefore the hope of Christians generally is to be understood in the sense as represented by Christian and apostolic writers, who record the faith of their followers in their communications to the churches. And here we have the fullest evidence that this doctrine in the ministration of the gospel, was delivered to them, and that they received it, and that it did become the foundation of their hope. This is very forcibly illustrated by the apostle Paul in his epistles to the Thessa-

lonians. The church gathered in Thessalonica had much to endure, both from Jews and pagans. It was in this place that the Jews stirred up what I may call the mob, by which to oppose the gospel. "The Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city in an uproar:"—and they raised a cry against the apostles, saying: "These men that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also." In addressing this church by letter, the apostle refers to the manner of his entering in among them, and how the word was resisted with much contention; but amidst all this, it was a matter of joy and wonder to the apostle to see "how ye turned from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven. For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy." The faith and practice of the Philippians are beautifully illustrated by this hope: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

This then, we see, brother, is the hope of

all Christ's followers—it is emphatically the CHRISTIAN HOPE—THE HOPE OF THE BELIEVER. It is true that Christians of the present day are not all of one mind, nor of one persuasion on the subject; they severally come to different conclusions as it regards their final state—the state of happiness and reward to which are appointed all the faithful followers of Jesus the Son God. Whatever may have been the distinct faith of the apostles, there is a prevailing idea among us, that the valley and shadow of death is the dividing line between the earth—this present visible and material world, and the spiritual, immaterial, and heavenly world. This view of the question supposes that all good people, at the hour of death, pass from this state immediately into the eternal state where God hath erected his THRONE, and where he holds his celestial court, attended by angels and saints:—the angels of various orders are *un-*embodied and immaterial spirits—the saints of human origin are *dis-*embodied spirits, differing from the angelic character, inasmuch as that a material body is an essential part of their whole character; and so at the resurrection, this body shall be raised from death and corruption to newness of life, and be re-united to the spirit, and so the one man, entire, body and soul, be beatified eternally together in that distant world we call heaven, where God and all holy intelligences reside. This consummation of the human character, you see, is to

eventuate at the resurrection of the last day: but the whole of this system seems to me to have nothing to do with the millennium, and the personal reign of Christ; if we except the resurrection of the body, which is generally ascribed to the exercise of the power of the Son of God in person, all may as well be brought about without a millennium of any sort, without any reign of Christ whatever. If all the saints who die, whether a natural death or as *martyrs*, go directly to heaven; and if all the saints who may be alive when Christ comes to final judgment be changed from mortal to immortal, and be taken by Christ with him into heaven, with all that are raised from their graves at the same time, then I do not see how there can be any millennial kingdom, any reign of Christ as God-man, any king upon the holy hill of Zion! I am aware that it will be said that the subjects of the millennial kingdom will consist of those believers who shall live in succeeding generations on the earth during the thousand years of Christ's spiritual reign. But then I cannot get over this objection, namely, that these *millennial saints* will form but a very small part of the redeemed; and so I am led to ask why this small part of the whole elect should be so distinguished, while all the rest are left out of this grand millennial scheme? To me this seems to be an insuperable objection to the spiritual and impersonal reign of Christ on the earth:

only to think, that while the great affairs of his kingdom are advancing and coming to their final issue, the GREAT KING himself is absent—He is, his people know not where! Not anywhere in his own proper dominions. He is said to be at his Father's right hand in the distant worlds of glory; but as to any knowledge of him, or personal intercourse with him, they have not any. Now to me this system seems to be so confused, and so lacking in the essentials of a kingdom, that I hesitate in admitting it into the economy of the GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF THE BLESSED GOD.

To demolish is oftentimes easy work, and desperate work too, when nothing better is substituted: let me therefore attempt, at least, to set forth some features of a system more in agreement with the economy of Christ's kingdom, than that which we have declined to embrace. The views we are endeavoring to establish concerning the kingdom of Christ, will go to demonstrate *the fulfilment of gospel promise, and the consummation of the whole evangelical economy.*

Deists, Materialists and Universalists agree in the admission that the Old Testament gives very little evidence, if any, of a future state: and some Christians, so called, fall in with the infidel conclusion. Let us look at this alleged case. And here, first, we must ask what definite idea is to be attached to the terms, *future state*? The term, as

thus compounded, is not found in holy writ; but without being fastidious or critical in this case, let us understand by the term, simply this, namely, that state and condition of mankind which will succeed this present life. Heaven is the future state to the righteous; perdition, or hell, that to the wicked. By the term *heaven*, in this case, we have generally understood what I have noticed above; the open vision of divine glory; a state of pure, immaterial, intellectual existence: a state and condition, however, of which we can have no conception, especially as such a state applies to man—it is altogether beyond our reach. We, hemmed up as we are within the bounds of four or five senses, cannot soar to regions so remote, so unsearchable, so infinite! This, then, is that state or condition of which skeptics say the Scriptures give no information; and some half-Christians have been taken in the snare:—yes, and not a few real Christians have been exceedingly puzzled to make out such a state of future existence as this, whether they have searched for it either in the Old Testament or in the New. And I am now inclined to admit the difficulty in the case: the Old Testament surely opens *no such* state of future glory for man, and the New, strictly speaking, is barren on the same topic. Do not be alarmed, my brother—do not sympathize with me as if I were in a desperate case: we are not going to give up

OUR HEAVEN and a glorious future state, because of the rank infidelity of Deists, Materialists, and Universalists, or because of the short-sightedness of some weak brethren in the household of faith. O, no; we are not to be driven away from our anchor by such a light, windy puff as this. No, no, dear reader; we have good and safe anchorage still, notwithstanding all attempts to strand us on the shallows of skepticism, or to drive us out to sea in a hurricane!

Let us see! The heaven for Christians, indeed for all good men, for all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, is prepared in the kingdom of our Lord, that kingdom which shall be revealed at his coming in glory and majesty; that same millennial state which we have described again and again, as set forth in God's holy word. And it will be an object of importance to search out and bring to view what the Old Testament declares concerning this future state.

Canaan of old, and Canaan as it was in its natural state, was a type of this promised land—this Canaan made anew; and so the enlightened patriarchs considered it; the inspired apostle tells us so: after having called up the worthies, and the worthy deeds of ancient date, as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, he says, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed

that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country: and truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city." Our Lord himself adds his testimony as it respects the faith of Abraham: "Abraham rejoiced to see my day; he saw it and was glad." The Psalms abound in songs of praise—their verse is enriched to luxury in praise of Christ's kingdom. The prophets luxuriate and exceed even to rapture in foretelling the glories of Messiah's majesty. I will give a specimen. "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her; rejoice for joy with her all ye that mourn for her, that ye may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations, that ye may milk out and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace unto her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream:—as one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." And so on, in a similar strain. This passage of the prophet Isaiah describes the latter day state of God's people; but lest any should think that

the second advent of the Lord is not sufficiently clear, let us see whether such a state of luxurious enjoyment is not connected with the coming of the Lord. In Isaiah xxv. this same prophet sets out and spreads a most sumptuous table:—"A feast of fat things; a feast of wines on the lees well refined, of fat things full of marrow:"—and upon the preparation of this feast it is added: "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he shall save us; this is the LORD, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Now, courteous reader, I cannot avoid the conclusion that this and these passages refer immediately to the happiness and glory of the *future state*, that heaven of peace and rest provided for the saints. Indeed, the conclusion is inevitable, for the festivity in which the Lord's people are to regale is connected with the overthrow of death, sin, and sorrow. "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the LORD God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it." The apostle Paul, when he describes the manner of the resurrection of the saints, and the commencement of celestial glory, refers to this "saying" of the

prophet: "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY!"

Enough, we think, has been set out before an unbelieving brother, to clear up what has been expressed in doubting mood in regard to the Old Testament doctrine of a *future state*. The second advent of Jesus the Messiah, his reign and majesty, constitute the heavenly kingdom of peace and felicity, provided for the godly of all generations; and this heavenly kingdom so illustrated is that very state of glory foretold by the Old and New Testament writers; with one voice and one word they both show the way of life—life eternal and immortal, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Well, then, we are brought to the conclusion that the second advent of Christ will fulfil the promises of the gospel, and consummate the whole evangelical economy. This is a grand winding up of so stupendous a plan;—a finish worthy of its beginning—a beginning, however, that did not at first promise so much; at most, few had sufficient penetration by which to see into this deep mystery. Angels desired to look into these things; of which salvation the prophets (too) have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the (coming) grace; searching what, and what manner of time the spirit of

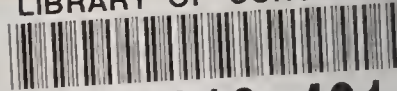
Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand, the sufferings of Christ, AND THE GLORY THAT SHOULD FOLLOW.” The whole of this—and much more might be recited to the same amount—goes in a direct line of testimony to declare that the whole economy of grace to man is in the order and after the manner we have attempted to evince and illustrate in the course we have pursued thus far.

And now, after what has been said on this great question, shall I add one word by way of apology? Shall I beg and entreat an unbelieving brother to look at the subject thus recommended to him? Or shall I frame an excuse for him, provided the subject should fail to excite his attention:—or, what is more likely, acknowledge the feebleness of *my advocacy*? I shall do neither of these. THE GRAND TOPIC admits of no apology. The sun asks not leave to shine. THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS is rising upon a murky world—upon a world that has long been enveloped in the gloom of night. “The valley of the shadow of death” hath thrown around these regions the horrors of perdition; but we are expecting a more happy season, and the signs of the times indicate the approach of that brighter day: aye, the gloom and terrors of this present time we do conceive to be in advance of that glorious era! Our Lord asketh with emphasis, “How is it that ye do not discern *this* time?” And you are

ready to ask what there is in *this time*—the day in which we live—this present hour while I am writing, that demands such close inquiry, or that awakens such alarm? Yes, my brother, I wish you to put the question close, and distinct; and I hope to be prepared with as distinct an answer!

I will now call up some of those impressions which the events of these times must have made upon our minds. It has been my lot to grow up, and to advance in years, during a succession of times and seasons the most momentous and striking the world ever saw! But do you ask again, why all this moment and consequence ascribed to this present age? Why give an importance to these days—an importance not admitted nor discovered in those gone by? The reason is manifest: the days past were preparatory, they were the days of *means*, but now cometh the *end*, the final crisis! My brother, have you not been sufficiently observant to apprehend upon the minds of all sober, thinking men, yea, upon your own mind, an impression in advance of some vast winding up—some close and finish to a long series of impending and doubtful and fearful events? The righteous and wicked have been, for some time past, even until now, I had almost said, in doubtful conflict. Dreadful has been the strife—endurance and appliance have distinguished both parties—the powers of the church, and the gates of hell

seem to have been balanced, and victory hanging in suspense. It is very difficult to say whether *sin* or *error* has been most obstinate and domineering. Certainly, error has not been wanting in stout-heartedness—in rashness—in boldness of adventure—in determination. Not to say anything of the gross and vulgar infidelity of the more brutish of mankind, as the French revolutionary philosophers; nor to speak of a more refined deism, such as was invented or advocated by Matt. Tindal: but let us speak of the bold attempts of men to dethrone and undeify “THE SON OF THE FATHER.” What a tremendous battle has been pushed even to the foot of the divine throne! *Arius*, in the fourth century brought vast forces to bear upon “the city of the great king;” but as mighty a power defeated and overthrew him and his whole array. During the last half century, a period that comes within the bounds of *this time*, what a concatenation of effort! The German bands—the ranks of Geneva—the subalterns of New England, and a small remnant of the “alien army” in Old England: these have confederated against the crown and kingdom of our Emmanuel; these have exerted a mighty prowess, and for a while, even to this hour, there seems to be fearful odds. There is the man of sin, wounded, as it was thought, “deadly,” in his own castle on the “Seven Hills,” is afresh bestirring himself, and stalk-



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ing abroad in all the earth, teaching men in hypocrisy, after the old sort, after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders: and his success seems to be commensurate with his exertions; men are given over to strong delusions to believe a lie, because they love not the truth that they might be saved. Here, too, is the same balance of human power. In these circumstances of desperation, the coming of the Lord is most devoutly to be wished. "The appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ, which in his times he shall show, who is the Blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords." These titles and this sovereignty are assumed by the Son of God, and the sceptre well becomes his hand. Well, my brother, this strong case, doubtful as it may seem to be, will soon be decided. "Behold, the Judge standeth before the door." Prayer is the privilege, and watchfulness the duty of every believer. "The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come. It will not tarry."